

Message Text

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PAGE 01 WARSAW 05425 280709Z
ACTION EUR-12

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 IO-13 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-05 H-01
 INR-10 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 SP-02 SS-15
 ICA-11 TRSE-00 OMB-01 /080 W
 -----061877 290838Z /23

R 271436Z JUN 78
FM AMEMBASSY WARSAW
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 5862
INFO AMEMBASSY BELGRADE
AMEMBASSY BERLIN
AMEMBASSY BONN
AMEMBASSY BUCHAREST
AMEMBASSY BUDAPEST
AMEMBASSY LONDON
AMEMBASSY MOSCOW
AMCONSUL MUNICH
AMEMBASSY PARIS
AMEMBASSY PRAGUE
AMEMBASSY BRUSSELS
USMISSION USNATO
AMEMBASSY SOFIA
AMEMBASSY VIENNA
AMEMBASSY POZNAN POUCH
AMCONSUL KRAKOW POUCH

C O N F I D E N T I A L WARSAW 5425

USEEC

EO 11652GDS
TAGS: ETRD, RO, HU, PL, UR, COMECON, ECIN, EEWT
SUBJ: COMECON SUMMIT MEETING IN BUCHAREST: REPORTS OF POSSIBLE
CHANGES IN COMECON VOTING RULES

REF: BUCHAREST 4352

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1. THE LIKELIHOOD OF THE COMECON VOTING SYSTEM BEING CHANGED
AT THE CURRENT COMECON COUNCIL MEETING IN BUCHAREST WAS DEALT
WITH BY FIRST SECRETARY EDWARD GIEREK IN RESPONSE TO A QUESTION
AT HIS JOINT PRESS CONFERENCE WITH HUNGARIAN PARTY SECRETARY
KADAR ON JUNE 23. AS FAR AS WE KNOW, GIEREK'S REPLY
IS THE FIRST MENTION OF THE TOPIC IN THE POLISH PRESS:

2. WE QUOTE GIEREK'S REPLY IN FULL:

17953. CERTAINLY WE DISCUSSED THE COMECON SESSION WHICH IS TO TAKE PLACE WITHIN THE NEXT FEW DAYS. BUT WE DID NOT DISCUSS ANYTHING HAVING TO DO WITH STRUCTUAL CHANGES, BECAUSE THEY ARE NOT NECESSARY. THE COUNCIL FOR MUTUAL ECONOMIC ASSISTANCE OPERATES EFFICIENTLY AND ANY POSSIBLE CORRECTION IN ITS WORK, CONNECTED WITH THE POWERFUL ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT OF OUR COUNTRIES, DOES NOT NECESSARILY IMPLY ANY BASIC CHANGES IN THE EXISTING SYSTEM. END QUOTE.

3. GIEREK'S RESPONSE APPEARS TO BE A SKILLFUL FINESSE. STRUCTUAL CHANGES WERE NOT DISCUSSED BECUASE THEY ARE NOT NEEDED. WHY? BECAUSE THE COMECON ORGANIZATION ALREADY OPERATES WELL. OF COURSE -- AND HERE A BOW TO SOVIET POSITION PAPERS WHICH MAY CONCEIVABLY SUGGEST A VOTING PROCEDURE CHANGE -- ANY POSSIBLE CORRECTIONS (FOR WHICH READ ADJUSTMENTS OR REVISIONS) WOULD NOT BE BASIC CHANGES.

4. THIS RESPONSE MIGHT BE CONSTRUED AS HAVING THE FULL ENDORSEMENT OF JANOS KADAR AS WELL AS GIEREK, AND HENCE THE SOVIETS SHOULD NOW HAVE -- NOT THAT THEY DID NOT ALREADY -- A REASONABLY GOOD IDEA OF HOW TWO MEMBER COUNTRIES, IN ADDITION TO ROMANIA, FEEL ABOUT ABANDONMENT OF THE "INTERESTED PARTY PRICIPLE," AND OTHER ESSENTIAL ELEMENTS IN COMECON'S PRECARIOUSLY CONTROLLED INTERNAL CONFIDENTIAL

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POLITICAL HARMONY.

5. SUMMING UP, WE CONCUR WITH PARA 5 OF BUCHAREST'S REFTTEL THAT SOME RULE CHANGES MAY BE PLANNED BUT THAT THEY WILL BE LIMITED AND TECHNICAL. ANY EFFORTS OR EVEN SOVIET PROPOSALS TO INVOKE A MAJORITY VOTING RULE, THEREBY "FORCING" ROMANIANS AND OTHERS TO JOIN MULTIALTERAL PROJECTS AGAINST THEIR WILL, WOULD NOT BE WORTH THE POLITICAL STRIFE INVOLVED.

6. WE ALSO THINK THE COMMENT OF THE ROMANIAN COUNSELOR IN WARSAW IS INTERESTING. SHOW A FINANCIAL TIMES ARTICLE ON THE RUMORED VOTING CHANGE, HIS FIRST REACTION WAS THAT IT WOULD MAKE COMECON A SUPRA-NATIONAL ORGANIZATION LIKE THE EEC. THIS SOURCE, WHO CLAIMED TO HAVE HEARD NOTHING ABOUT THERUMORED PROPOSALS, SUGGESTED THAT THE TANJUG AGENCY WAS BEING "OVERLY IMAGINATIVE", ALTHOUGH WE BELIEVE HE KNEW BETTER.
SCHAUFEELE

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NNN

Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: X
Capture Date: 01 jan 1994
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: VOTING, RULES, SUMMIT MEETINGS, MEETING REPORTS, EXPORT LICENSES
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Draft Date: 27 jun 1978
Decaption Date: 01 jan 1960
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 20 Mar 2014
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1978WARSAW05425
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: n/a
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: GS
Errors: N/A
Expiration:
Film Number: D780268-0963
Format: TEL
From: WARSAW USEEC
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1978/newtext/t19780614/aaaaalym.tel
Line Count: 112
Litigation Code IDs:
Litigation Codes:
Litigation History:
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE, ON MICROFILM
Message ID: ec60e57e-c288-dd11-92da-001cc4696bcc
Office: ACTION EUR
Original Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Original Handling Restrictions: n/a
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 3
Previous Channel Indicators: n/a
Previous Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Reference: 78 BUCHAREST 4352
Retention: 0
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 27 apr 2005
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review Media Identifier:
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
SAS ID: 2186289
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: COMECON SUMMIT MEETING IN BUCHAREST: REPORTS OF POSSIBLE CHANGES IN COMECON VOTING RULES
TAGS: ETRD, ECIN, EEWT, RO, HU, PL, UR, COMECON
To: STATE
Type: TE
vdkgvwkey: odb://SAS/SAS.dbo.SAS_Docs/ec60e57e-c288-dd11-92da-001cc4696bcc
Review Markings:
Sheryl P. Walter
Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
20 Mar 2014
Markings: Sheryl P. Walter Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 20 Mar 2014